



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 2  
290 BROADWAY  
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

FEB 10 2004

**GENERAL NOTICE LETTER  
CERTIFIED MAIL-RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**

Mr. Stephen C. Forsyth, CEO  
Hexcel Corporation  
2 Stamford Plaza  
Stamford, CT 06901

RE: Diamond Alkali Superfund Site  
Notice of Potential Liability for  
Response Actions in the Lower Passaic River Study Area, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Forsyth:

The United States Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") is charged with responding to the release and/or threatened release of hazardous substances, pollutants, and contaminants into the environment and with enforcement responsibilities under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980, as amended ("CERCLA"), 42 U.S.C. §9601 et seq. Accordingly, EPA is seeking your cooperation in an innovative approach to environmental remediation and restoration activities for the Lower Passaic River.

EPA has documented the release or threatened release of hazardous substances, pollutants and contaminants into the six-mile stretch of the river, known as the Passaic River Study Area, which is part of the Diamond Alkali Superfund Site ("Site") located in Newark, New Jersey. Based on the results of previous CERCLA remedial investigation activities and other environmental studies, including a reconnaissance study of the Passaic River conducted by the United States Army Corps of Engineers ("USACE"), EPA has further determined that contaminated sediments and other potential sources of hazardous substances exist along the entire 17-mile tidal reach of the Lower Passaic River. Thus, EPA has decided to expand the Study to include the areal extent of contamination to which hazardous substances from the six-mile stretch were transported; and those sources from which hazardous substances outside the six-mile stretch have come to be located within the expanded Study Area.

By this letter, EPA is notifying Hexcel Corporation ("Hexcel") of its potential liability relating to the Site pursuant to Section 107(a) of CERCLA, 42 U.S.C. §9607(a). Under CERCLA, potentially responsible parties ("PRPs") include current and past owners of a facility, as well as persons who arranged for the disposal or treatment of hazardous substances at the Site, or the transport of hazardous substances to the Site.

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In recognition of our complementary roles, EPA has formed a partnership with USACE and the New Jersey Department of Transportation-Office of Maritime Resources ("OMR") ["the governmental partnership"] to identify and to address water quality improvement, remediation, and restoration opportunities in the 17-mile Lower Passaic River. This governmental partnership is consistent with a national Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") executed on July 2, 2002 between EPA and USACE. This MOU calls for the two agencies to cooperate, where appropriate, on environmental remediation and restoration of degraded urban rivers and related resources. In agreeing to implement the MOU, the EPA and USACE will use their existing statutory and regulatory authorities in a coordinated manner. These authorities for EPA include CERCLA, the Clean Water Act, and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. The USACE's authority stems from the Water Resources Development Act ("WRDA"). WRDA allows for the use of some federal funds to pay for a portion of the USACE's approved projects related to ecosystem restoration.

For the first phase of the Lower Passaic River Restoration Project, the governmental partners are proceeding with an integrated five- to seven-year study to determine an appropriate remediation and restoration plan for the river. The study will involve investigation of environmental impacts and pollution sources, as well as evaluation of alternative actions, leading to recommendations of environmental remediation and restoration activities. This study is being conducted by EPA under the authority of CERCLA and by USACE and OMR, as local sponsor, under WRDA. EPA, USACE, and OMR are attempting to coordinate with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and the Federal and State Natural Resource Trustee agencies. EPA, USACE, and OMR estimate that the study will cost approximately \$20 million, with the WRDA and CERCLA shares being about \$10 million each. EPA will be seeking its share of the costs of the study from PRPs.

Based on information that EPA evaluated during the course of its investigation of the Site, EPA believes that hazardous substances were being released from Hexcel's facility located at 205 Main Street in Lodi, New Jersey, into the Lower Passaic River. Hazardous substances, pollutants and contaminants released from the facility into the river present a risk to the environment and the humans who may ingest contaminated fish and shellfish. Therefore, Hexcel may be potentially liable for response costs which the government may incur relating to the study of the Lower Passaic River. In addition, responsible parties may be required to pay damages for injury to, destruction of, or loss of natural resources, including the cost of assessing such damages.

Enclosed is a list of the other PRPs who have received Notice letters. This list represents EPA's findings on the identities of PRPs to date. We are continuing efforts to locate additional PRPs who have released hazardous substances, directly or indirectly, into the Passaic River. Inclusion on, or exclusion from, the list does not constitute a final determination by EPA concerning the liability of any party for the release or threat of release of hazardous substances at the Site. Be advised that notice of your potential liability at the Site may be forwarded to all parties on this list.

We request that you consider becoming a "cooperating party" for the Lower Passaic River Restoration Project. As a cooperating party, you, along with many other such parties, will be

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expected to fund EPA's share of the study costs. Upon completion of the study, it is expected that CERCLA and WRDA processes will be used to identify the required remediation and restoration programs, as well as the assignment of remediation and restoration costs. At this time, the commitments of the cooperating parties will apply only to the study. For those who choose not to cooperate, EPA may apply the CERCLA enforcement process, pursuant to Sections 106 (a) and 107(a) of CERCLA, 42 U.S.C. §9606(a) and §9607(a) and other laws.

A group of Notice letter recipients represented by Mr. William Hyatt, Esq. of Kirkpatrick & Lockhart LLP in Newark, NJ is currently negotiating the terms of an Administrative Order on Consent ("AOC") with the EPA, draft enclosed. You are strongly urged to contact Mr. Hyatt at (973) 848-4045 as soon as possible since EPA has established a February 20, 2004 deadline for execution of the AOC.

Pursuant to CERCLA Section 113(k), EPA must establish an administrative record that contains documents that form the basis of EPA's decision on the selection of a response action for a site. The administrative record files, which contain the documents related to the response action selected for this Site are located at EPA's Region 2 office (290 Broadway, New York) on the 18<sup>th</sup> floor. You may call the Records Center at (212) 637-4308 to make an appointment to view the administrative record for the Diamond Alkali Site, Passaic River.

If you wish to discuss this further, please contact Ms. Elizabeth Butler, Remedial Project Manager, at (212) 637-4396 or Ms. Kedari Reddy, Assistant Regional Counsel, at (212) 637-3106. Please note that all communications from attorneys should be directed to Ms. Reddy.

Sincerely yours,



George Pavlou, Director  
Emergency and Remedial Response Division

Enclosures

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<b>Contact</b>	
<p>Eliza Pizzino, Esq.  Alcan Aluminum Corporation  6060 Parkland Blvd.  Mayfield Heights, OH 44101-1977</p>	<p>Alcan Aluminum Corporation</p>
<p>Joseph Fiorenzo, Esq.  Sokol, Behot &amp; Fiorenzo  Continental Plaza  433 Hackensack Avenue  Hackensack, NJ 07601</p>	<p>Alden Leeds Inc.</p>
<p>Fredi L. Pearlmutter, Esq.  Cooper, Rose &amp; English, LLP  480 Morris Avenue  Summit, New Jersey 07901-1527</p>	<p>Alliance Chemical, Inc.</p>
<p>A. Christian Worrell III, Esq.  Head &amp; Ritchey, LLP  1900 Fifth Third Center  511 Walnut Street  Cincinnati, OH 45202</p>	<p>Andrew Jergens Co.</p>
<p>Peter Herzberg, Esq.  Pitney, Hardin, Kipp &amp; Szuch  P.O. Box 1945  Morristown, NJ 07962</p>	<p>Ashland Specialty Chemical</p>
<p>Nan Bernardo, Esq.  BASF Corporation  3000 Continental Drive North  Mount Olive, NJ 07828</p>	<p>BASF Corporation</p>
<p>David Farer, Esq.  Farer Fersko  600 South Avenue  P.O. Box 580  Westfield, NJ 07091</p>	<p>Benjamin Moore &amp; Co.</p>
<p>Anthony Reitano, Esq.  Herold &amp; Haines, P.A.  25 Independence Boulevard  Warren, NJ 07059</p>	<p>Celanese Corp.</p>

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Stephen Geller, Esq. Himelman, Werthheim & Geller 1405 Route 18 South, Suite 201 Old Bridge, NJ 08857	Chemical Compounds Inc.
Brian Kelly, Esq. News America Incorporated 767 Fifth Avenue, 46th Floor New York, NY 10153	Chris Craft Industries, Inc.
Russell Hewit, Esq. Dughi & Hewit 340 North Avenue Cranford, NJ 07016	Congoleum Corporation
James Maher, Esq. Curtiss-Wright Corp. 4 Becker Farm Road Roseland, NJ 07068	Curtiss-Wright Corp.
Bernard J. Reilly, Esq. Corporate Counsel E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Co. 1007 Market Street Wilmington, DE 19898	E.I du Pont de Nemours & Co.
Randy Schillinger, Esq. Saiber Schlesinger Satz & Goldstein One Gateway Center, 13 <sup>th</sup> floor Newark, NJ 07102	Elan Chemical Company
Al Reisch, President E M Sergeant Pulp & Chemical Co. Inc. 6 Chelsea Road Clifton, New Jersey 07102	E M Sergeant Pulp & Chemical Co. Inc.
John Mayo, Esq. EnPro Industries 5605 Carnegie Boulevard Charlotte, North Carolina 28209	EnPro Industries
Kenneth Mack, Esq. Fox, Rothschild, O'Brien & Frankel Princeton Pike Corp.Center 997 Lenox Drive, Building 3 Lawrenceville, NJ 08648	Essex Chemical Corp.

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Suzana Loncor, Esq. Norris, McLaughlin & Marcus 721 Route 202-206 Bridgewater, NJ 08807	Fairmount Chemical Co.
Stephen Forsyth, CEO Hexcel Corporation 2 Stamford Plaza Stamford, CT 06901	Hexcel Corporation
David DeClement, Esq. P.O. Box 217 55 Simpson Avenue Pitman, NJ 08071	Kearny Smelting & Refining
Ralph McMurry, Esq. Hill, Betts & Nash LLP 1 Riverfront Plaza, Suite 327 Newark, NJ 07102-5401	Lucent Technologies, Inc.
William Hatfield, Esq. Pitney Hardin 200 Campus Drive Florham Park, NJ 07932	Mallinckrodt, Inc.
David Hayes, Esq. Latham & Watkins 555 11 <sup>th</sup> Street, NW Suite 1000 Washington, DC 20004	Monsanto Company
Andrew Sawula, Esq. Schiff Hardin & Waite 233 South Wacker Drive 6600 Sears Tower Chicago, IL 60606	Newell Rubbermaid, Inc.
Jeffrey Pollock, Esq. Fox Rothschild P.O. Box 5231 Princeton, NJ 08543	NPEC Inc., Bayer, Eastman Kodak
Sarah Martin, Esq. Robinson & Cole LLP 695 East Main Street Stamford, CT 06904-2305	Otis Elevator Co.

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Michael McThomas, Esq. Pfizer Inc. 235 E. 42 <sup>nd</sup> St. New York, NY 10017	Pfizer Inc.
Paul King, Esq. PPG Industries, Inc. One PPG Place Pittsburgh, PA 15272	PPG Industries, Inc.
Christopher McAuliffe, Esq. PSE&G Co. 80 Park Plaza, TCS Newark, NJ 07102	PSE&G Co.
David Flynn, Esq. Phillips Lytle LLP 3400 HSBC Center Buffalo, NY 14203	Reichhold, Inc.
Anne Frye, Esq. Reilly Industries, Inc. 300 N. Meridian Street Suite 1500 Indianapolis, IN 46204	Reilly Industries, Inc.
John Klock, Esq. Gibbons, Del Deo, Dolan 1 River Front Plaza Newark, NJ 07102	RSR Corp.
Kenneth Winger, President Safety-Kleen Envirosystems Company 1301 Gervais Street Columbia, SC 29201	Safety-Kleen Envirosystems Company
Donald McConnell, Esq. The Sherwin-Williams Co. 101 Prospect Avenue, NW Cleveland, OH 44115-1075	Sherwin- Williams Co.
Norman Spindel, Esq. Lowenstein Sandler PC 65 Livingston Avenue Roseland, NJ 07068	Spartech Corp.

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Gail S. Port, Esq. Proskauer Rose LLP 1585 Broadway New York, NY 10036	TEVA Pharmaceuticals USA Inc.
Carol Dinkins, Esq. Vinson & Elkins LLP 2300 First City Tower 1001 Fannin Street Houston, TX 77002	Tierra Solutions Inc.
Miriam Villani, Esq. Farrell Fritz, P.C. EAB Plaza Uniondale, New York 11556	Three County Volkswagen
Linda Kelley, Esq. Viacom Inc. 11 Stanwix Street Pittsburgh, PA 15222	Viacom Inc.
Glenn Tucker, Esq. Greenberg Dauber Epstein & Tucker One Gateway Center, Suite 600 Newark, NJ 07102	Wiggins Plastics Inc.

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